

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 03243 211237Z

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-03 SWF-02 AGR-20

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y -- E.O., TAGS, & SUBJ LINES ADDED.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, UNRWA, XF, EEC

SUBJ: EC AID TO MIDDLE EAST REFUGEES

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PAGE 02 EC BRU 03243 211237Z

1. SUMMARY. THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HAS UNDERWAY OR UNDER

CONSIDERATION A THREE-PRONGED PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE TO MIDDLE EAST REFUGEES THROUGH UNRWA. IN THE FIELD OF FOOD AID, THE COMMISSION HAS PROPOSED TO THE COUNCIL AN INCREASE IN FOOD AND RELATED FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE PERIOD 1974/75. POSITIVE COUNCIL ACTION ON THIS PROPOSAL IS EXPECTED BEFORE THE SUMMER BREAK. THE EC COUNCIL HAS NOT YET TAKEN A DECISION ON THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL FOR A SPECIAL EMERGENCY CONTRIBUTION TO HELP COVER UNRWA'S CURRENT BUDGETARY DEFICIT. ACTION ON THE EMERGENCY CONTRIBUTION IS EXPECTED AT THE COUNCIL SESSION ON JUNE 25, BUT, IN THE WORDS OF A COMMISSION OFFICIAL, COULD BECOME THE VICTIM OF THE "VOLATILE" SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE THIRD PROGRAM, SPECIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH, HAS BEEN PUT ON THE BACK BURNER PENDING RESOLUTION OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, WHEN THE COMMUNITY AND UNRWA WILL HAVE A CLEARER PICTURE OF WHERE THE EDUCATION AND HEALTH CENTERS WILL HAVE TO BE LOCATED. END SUMMARY.

2. FOOD AID. UNDER THE THREE-YEAR PROGRAM OF FOOD AID TO THE MIDDLE EAST REFUGEES ADOPTED BY THE COMMUNITY IN 1972 (EC A-377 OF DECEMBER 29, 1972, NOTAL), THE COMMISSION IS PROPOSING THAT THE COUNCIL APPROVE CERTAIN INCREASES FOR THE PERIOD JULY 1, 1974 TO JUNE 30, 1975. THE CONTRIBUTIONS PROPOSED FOR THIS PERIOD ARE AS FOLLOWS: (1) UNDER THE NORMAL DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM, 6,000 TONS OF WHITE SUGAR (NO CHANGE FROM 1973/74); (2) UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTAL DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM, 3,553 TONS OF WHEAT IN THE FORM OF 2,353 TONS OF FLOUR (IN THE 1973/74 PERIOD THE FIGURES WERE 2,831 TONS OF WHEAT OR 1,868 TONS OF FLOUR); 193 TONS OF HUSKED RICE IN THE FORM OF 150 TONS OF MILLED RICE (IN 1973/74 THE FIGURES WERE 157 TONS OF HUSKED RICE OR 122 TONS OF MILLED RICE); 94 TONS OF WHITE SUGAR (62 TONS IN 1973/74); AND 300 TONS OF SKIM MILK POWDER (1,600 TONS IN 1973/74); (3) UNDER THE SUPPLEMENTAL CASH DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM, 2,262,000 UNITS OF ACCOUNT (ONE UA EQUALS \$1.2063; 1,610,000 UA IN 1973/74); (4) FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEEDING CENTERS, 11,000 UA (AGAINST NOTHING IN 1973/74 AND 41,500 UA IN 1972/73).

3. EMERGENCY BUDGETARY AID. THE EC PROVISIONAL BUDGET FOR 1974 CONTAINS AN ALLOCATION OF TWO MILLION UA FOR AID TO THE MIDDLE EAST REFUGEES PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF EDUCATION. (THE SUM WAS INTENDED TO BE THE BEGINNING OF THE COMMUNITY'S FIVE-YEAR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 EC BRU 03243 211237Z

EDUCATION AND HEALTH PROGRAM - SEE BELOW.) THE COMMISSION NOW PROPOSES TO USE THIS SUM, PLUS AN ADDITIONAL 4.55 MILLION UA, AS A SPECIAL ONE-TIME GRANT TO HELP COVER THE CURRENT UNRWA BUDGETARY DEFICIT. ALTHOUGH THE AID WOULD BE IN CASH, THE COMMISSION PROPOSES THAT IT BE EARMARKED FOR POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION IN ORDER THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO CUT-BACK IN THIS PROGRAM. THE ADDITIONAL 4.55 MILLION UA WOULD REQUIRE A SUPPLEMENT TO THE COMMUNITY'S 1974 BUDGET OR, MORE LIKELY,

INCLUSION IN THE 1975 BUDGET. THE EMERGENCY AID WAS TO HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AT THE SESSION OF APRIL 1-2, BUT WAS NOT PLACED ON THE AGENDA. COMMISSION ACTION PROPOSING THE AID WAS SUSPENDED BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE MINISTERS WOULD WANT TO CONSIDER THIS SUBJECT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COMMUNITY'S RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB NATIONS. THIS APPEARS NOW NOT TO BE THE CASE, AND NO MEMBER STATE HAS ASKED THAT THE EMERGENCY AID FOR UNRWA BE TIED INTO THE BROADER POLITICAL QUESTION OF EC-ARAB RELATIONS. THE COMMISSION HAS FORMALLY MADE ITS PROPOSAL, THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES IS STUDYING THE SUBJECT, AND A COMMISSION OFFICIAL EXPECTS THAT THE COUNCIL OF (FOREIGN) MINISTERS WILL TAKE UP THE MATTER AT THE SESSION OF JUNE 25. COMMISSION OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT THE COUNCIL'S ACTION WILL BE POSITIVE (ALTHOUGH THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF THE AID MIGHT BE CHANGED), BUT THEY ARE VERY CAUTIOUS IN THIS ESTIMATE, POINTING OUT THAT NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST COULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL ACTION.

4. LONG-TERM EDUCATION AND HEALTH PROGRAM. AS PART OF ITS TOTAL PROGRAM OF AID TO THE MIDDLE EAST, THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IN SEPTEMBER 1972 DECIDED IN PRINCIPLE TO PURSUE A PROGRAM OF AID IN THE FIELDS OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH. DURING 1973, THE COMMISSION DREW UP A FIVE-YEAR PROGRAM IN THESE FIELDS WHICH WOULD COST ABOUT 22 MILLION UA. THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT OF OCTOBER 1973 CAUSED THE COMMISSION TO SUSPEND FURTHER WORK ON THE PROGRAM AND A COMMISSION SOURCE HAS SAID THAT IT IS UNLIKELY THAT IT WILL SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY "AT LEAST THIS YEAR". AS MATTERS NOW STAND IN THE MIDDLE EAST, NEITHER THE COMMISSION NOR UNRWA WISHES TO PREJUDGE THE FUTURE LOCATION OF THE REFUGEES BY DECIDING NOWHON THE LOCATION OF SCHOOLS AND HEALTH CENTERS.

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PAGE 04 EC BRU 03243 211237Z

5. THE ORIGINAL COMMISSION PROPOSAL OF JULY 1972 FOR AID TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROPOSED, IN ADDITION TO THE FOOD AID, EDUCATION AND HEALTH PROGRAMS DESCRIBED ABOVE, A PROGRAM OF FINANCIAL AID TO THE COUNTRIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST. THIS ASPECT OF COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE TO THE MIDDLE EAST HAS NOT YET BEEN THE SUBJECT OF ANY COMMISSION PROPOSALS, NOR OF ANY REQUESTS FROM THE COUNCIL FOR SUCH PROPOSALS. COMMISSION SOURCES TEND TO DISMISS FINANCIAL AID TO THE NATIONS OF THE REGION AS SOMETHING WHICH CAN ONLY BE CONSIDERED IN THE FUTURE, WHEN THE DUST HAS SETTLED. GREENWALD

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